

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

S E C R E T STATE 159161

EXDIS

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PBOR, IS, XF

SUBJECT: GOI POSTURE RE SETTLEMENTS IN AND RETENTION OF
OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

REFERENCE: STATE 151938; TEL AVIV 3874 AND 3899

1. TEL AVIV REFTELS OUTLINE LATEST ISRAELI STATEMENTS OF
INTENT TO EXPAND ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS IN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES
WHICH HAVE PROMPTED MOUNTING EXPRESSIONS OF CONCERN FROM
SAUDIS INCLUDING KING FAISAL AS REPORTED IN SEVERAL RECENT
JIDDA MESSAGES. EMBASSY WILL RECALL OUR EFFORTS AT END OF
1973 TO SEEK TO HOLD DOWN PRESS ARTICLES IN ISRAEL ABOUT
ALLEGED PLANS TO ESTABLISH NEW ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS IN
TERRITORIES. EFFORT WAS HAMPERED BY ABSENCE OF PRESS
CENSORSHIP IN ISRAEL ON ANY BUT PURELY MILITARY MATTERS AND
ALSO BY STRONG OPPOSITION ON PART OF INDIVIDUAL ISRAELIS
IN HIGH PLACES TO ANY WITHDRAWAL FROM TERRITORIES. THESE

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ISRAELIS ARE ABLE TO PLANT AUTHORITATIVE-SOUNDING REPORTS

IN PRESS ABOUT ALLEGED SETTLEMENT PLANS.

2. AS EMBASSY KNOWS WE APPROACHED GOI IN NOVEMBER RE PRESS ARTICLE PREDICTING IMMINENT DISCUSSION BY MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE FOR SETTLEMENT IN ADMINISTERED TERRITORIES OF PLAN TO DOUBLE ISRAELI SETTLER POPULATION IN GOLAN HEIGHTS, SAYING WE FELT SUCH STORIES WERE MOST UNHELPFUL TO MIDDLE

EAST PEACE EFFORTS. MRS. MEIR REPLIED THAT SHE TOO CONSIDERED PUBLICITY OF THIS KIND TO BE UNHELPFUL, ALTHOUGH SHE IN PRINCIPLE FAVORED ENLARGING ISRAELI POPULATION IN GOLAN HEIGHTS AS NEEDED FOR SECURITY REASONS. SHE EXPLAINED THAT ZIONIST ORGANIZATION AND NOT GOI ITSELF WAS SOURCE OF PRESS STORY AND WOULD BE HARD TO MUZZLE, SINCE MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE DID EXIST AND DID HOLD DISCUSSIONS OF SUCH MATTERS. SHE AGREED TO SEEK TO MUTE SUCH PUBLICITY, AND TO BEST OF OUR RECOLLECTION, NO FURTHER STORIES OF THIS KIND APPEARED IN ISRAELI PRESS FOR ABOUT TWO MONTHS.

3. ON BASIS OF ABOVE EXPERIENCE, WE ARE NOT SANGUINE THAT FURTHER ADMONISHMENT OF GOI ON PUBLICITY ALONE WILL BE EFFECTIVE. NEVERTHELESS, IN VIEW DIFFICULTIES SUCH PUBLICITY GENERATES IN US-ARAB RELATIONS, WE WANT TO TAKE ANOTHER LOOK AT PROBLEM. TO ASSIST OUR REVIEW, WE WOULD LIKE (A) UPDATE OF EMBASSY TEL AVIV'S ASSESSMENT OF LIKELIHOOD GOI WILL PRESS FORWARD WITH PLANS ALONG THESE LINES BETWEEN NOW AND END OF YEAR, AND (B) VIEWS OF EMBASSY TEL AVIV ON WAYS GOI MIGHT BE INDUCED TO TURN OFF PUBLIC COMMENTS ON EXPANDING SETTLEMENTS IN TERRITORIES. RUNDOWN BY EMBASSY TEL AVIV ON ACTUAL ISRAELI SETTLEMENT ACTIVITY IN TERRITORIES SINCE OCTOBER WAR (ESPECIALLY NEW STARTS) IS ALSO REQUESTED. KISSINGER

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